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### **Attorney General Biden Takes Another Step in the Fight Against Child Predators**

**Wilmington, DE** – In order to give prosecutors the power to put child predators away for longer periods of time, Attorney General Beau Biden announced that the Delaware Department of Justice has drafted legislation to strengthen penalties for sexual offenses against children. The legislation, introduced as House Bill 421 by Representative Pete Schwartkopf (D-Rehoboth), increases the penalties against those convicted of unlawful sexual contact and those found guilty of the distribution of child pornography. The Bill also takes into account the new ways pornographers use technology to victimize children by broadening the scope of the law to include all modes of dealing in illegal images, electronic or otherwise.

“Those who make sexual contact with children are predators – that’s clear,” Attorney General Biden stated, “but possessors of child pornography are also predators. Children are victimized not only when pornographic pictures of them are taken, but every time those pictures are viewed. That’s why we’re calling for tougher penalties for criminals who victimize children in any way.”

House Bill 421 recognizes the severity of child sexual abuse by:

- Increasing the penalties for unlawful sexual contact with children
- Toughening the penalties for possessing and distributing child pornography
- Establishing a mandatory prison sentence for distributing child pornography
- Broadening the law to account for all forms of child pornography, including the use of new electronic devices, such as camera phones and iPods

“I am proud to stand with Representative Pete Schwartkopf in securing the most powerful tools for law enforcement in the fight to keep kids safe,” Attorney General Biden stated. “We can never cease to be vigilant when it comes to protecting children from predators.”

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